

Design, security and sustainability: packaging is strategic for Private Labels

A convention promoted by Milan's European Institute of Design (IED) plus the ADI Packaging Design Award focus on the theme of packaging at MarcabyBolognaFiere
Bologna, 16 and 17 January 2019

The first impact on the consumer also begins with the appeal of the packaging on the shelf. In mass consumption, however, packaging is strategic also for other clear reasons: the integrity of the product, the security and the capacity to ensure the shelf-life, as an ID card for the contents thanks to the information it communicates also in terms of traceability, and also, its contribution to the circular economy through the use of eco-compatible materials and its potential to be recycled easily.

Highly relevant themes for grocery retail, the sector in which many Private Label products are increasingly linked to their capacity to offer original and effective solutions.

For this reason packaging will be one of the themes at the centre of a series of initiatives at MarcabyBolognaFiere, the International Exhibition and Conference for Private Label products due to take place on 16 and 17 January and organised by BolognaFiere in collaboration with ADM, the Italian Grocery Retail Association.

Packaging will be discussed on numerous occasions and in various ways, beginning with the convention **Packaging and innovation: methods, brands and markets**, scheduled for 16 January and organised by Milan's European Institute of Design (IED). Furthermore, the ADI Packaging Design Award will showcase and acknowledge the most innovative solutions during the event.

The importance of packaging is at the heart of the collaboration between the European Institute of Design and MarcabyBolognaFiere for the launch, in the next academic year, of a higher education course for designers and packaging professionals in order to help them to manage the procedures required by the continuous innovation of the sector.

"When we talk of packaging, co-packers are embarking on new pathways of innovation and are becoming increasingly central," explains Carlo Branzaglia, Scientific Coordinator of the Postgraduate school at the IED in Milan. "Today co-packers are becoming a substantial link in the packaging chain, they are required to steer innovation, becoming an active interlocutor in grocery retail, and also participate in a direct dialogue with the consumer. This means that they must be able to systematize their own technological capacities while it is an absolute must for them to be able to work on design and branding."

"Packaging is one of the emerging themes," explained Marco Momoli, Commercial Director of BolognaFiere, "for the aspects that it involves (from security to sustainability, to its commercial strategic value to innovation). For this reason we felt it appropriate to provide this sector with a scenario in which to examine and discuss the topic in greater detail. MarcabyBolognaFiere will be the opportunity to analyse the trends and appreciate the high levels of innovation that characterise the technologies and materials used."

Design, security and sustainability. “We begin with the latter, which is finally real and no longer just a stated intention,” comments professor Branzaglia. “I’m thinking of the reduction in encumbrances, of secondary packaging, of smart packaging solutions, of vacuum packing.” Concerning the other two themes, co-packers now employ specialists that offer technical skills for security and product traceability to promote through the packaging, as well as intensive research into design: for private label products the transformation of the packaging, through the adoption of materials and original solutions has been highlighted as one of the key factors of innovation. The capacity of increasingly autonomous proposals compared with industrial brand products, acquires even greater meaning if associated with the typologies of products achieving the highest growth in private labels (premium +17.9% in value), organic-ecological (+10.5%) and functional (+10.2%) (source: Marca Report 2018).

“MarcabyBolognaFiere’s role as the reference event for the Private Label sector,” explains Marco Momoli, “is associated with its central geographical position, in the region that hosts the “packaging valley” as well as the “Italian food valley”. Within this context, the event is the place in which the entire production chain opens up and in which each interlocutor can speak with others, as well as identifying and recognising the overall governing system.”

In comparison with other European countries, in reference to the packaging sector, Italy stands out for its technical skills and also, for its capacity to find innovative and diversified solutions for the biodiversity of our products. At the same time, and with further potential for development, is the attention to the relationship between primary and secondary packaging and also, the usability of the objects in question to the target consumers (for example, the elderly) whose needs should be at the top of the innovation agenda. These questions too will meet with debate and answers at the coming edition of MarcabyBolognaFiere.

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